



LIBERIA

MCC Learning from

“Baseline and Interim Report”

International Development Group, April 2021

MCC has identified the following programmatic and evaluation lessons based on the Baseline and Interim Report of the Liberia Roads Evaluation.

PROGRAMMATIC LESSONS

- ***When compacts enter into force before proper due diligence work and project design have taken place, implementation and long-term sustainability are damaged.*** The report notes that the Liberia Compact entered into force on an accelerated timeline and as a result, the Roads Project was not ready and was still being designed well into implementation. Proper due diligence and planning around the Roads Sector Reform Activity weren’t given sufficient time to take place, so the team wasn’t able to design and implement activities such as more training for the National Road Fund (NRF) that could have supported sustainability. The report and country team both note that the Liberia Compact benefitted from excellent donor coordination and complementary projects by donors that served as some measure of sustainability support, but the long-term viability of the NRF and the new data-driven road maintenance regime remain at risk due in part to a lack of project planning time and resources.
- ***The enforcement of Conditions Precedent (CPs) is a necessary part of Compact implementation, even when the failure to meet CPs may be connected to insufficiently planned projects.*** As the report notes, the Government of Liberia (GoL) was able to satisfy most of the CPs set forth in the Compact but was unable to fulfill a crucial CP mandating the consistent deposit of fuel levies into the Road Fund to ensure adequate funding of road maintenance works. The de-scoping of the Matching Road Maintenance Fund Sub-Activity after repeated non-adherence to the CP was a painful step, but a necessary one to maintain MCC’s leverage in the future. Per the report, both exogenous shocks (e.g., 2017 elections) and the lack of training and activities to support the consistent transfer of funds from LRA, MFDP, and NRF played a role in GoL’s inability to meet the CP. The CPs themselves were achievable and not overly restrictive, so enforcement of the CPs was a necessary step for future MCC work. As the report notes, the project should not have come into effect until the CPs were met to ensure maximum project impact. However, the de-scoping may not have been necessary if proper sustainability activities were planned. MCC failing to uphold the CPs *and* failing to initially provide the needed support would have compounded the problem rather than alleviating it.